

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the final Office Action mailed November 12, 2003. Claims 1-47 were pending in the Application prior to the outstanding Office Action. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-8, 10-20, 22-25, and 27-47. Applicants have cancelled claims 42-46 and amended claims 1,3, 33, and 47. Claims 1-41 and 47 are now pending.

I. Summary of Office Action

Claims 21, and 26 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1-3, 5-10, 15-20, 22-25, and 27-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ohkado* (U.S. Patent No. 6,542,165).

Claims 4 and 11-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ohkado* in view of *England* (U.S. Patent No. 6,144,991).

II. Summary of Response

Applicants have amended independent claims 33 and 47 to contain the allowable subject matter of claims 26 and 21 respectively.

Applicants have cancelled claims 42-46

Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 3 to more clearly define the invention.

Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's 103(a) rejection regarding claims 1-20, 22-25, and 27-32, as amended.

III. Response

In the action of April 30, 2003, the Examiner indicated that the subject matter of claims 21 and 26 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Independent claims 33 and 47 have been amended to recite the subject matter of claims 26 and 21 respectively. Applicants submit that these claims and their respective dependent claims are now allowable.

With regards to claims 1-32

Claim 1, as amended, recites,

A system for placing and maintaining anchored conversations within an artifact comprising a *file having a file type*, the system comprising:
 an application configured to access the artifact, wherein the application is *associated with the file type*;
 a conversation client configured to access said anchored conversation and to receive communications regarding a portion of the artifact, *while the artifact is viewed within the application*;

The present invention discloses a system whereby users are able to engage in conversations anchored to locations within commonly viewed files. These files are viewed from their native applications on the system of each user. The claimed system is especially efficient as it utilizes the file viewing capacities of applications associated with the file. For example, a Microsoft Excel document could be viewed from the Microsoft Excel application on the user's system.

Ohkado, which discloses a system of collaborative image generation programs, does not disclose or suggest the features of the claimed invention. *Ohkado* does not disclose the collective accessing and conversing about files. Rather *Ohkado* discloses a system for highlighting physical sections of a viewing window so that the sections can be viewed on other systems. The annotations of *Ohkado* are not associated with the files themselves, but rather the raw images that are transmitted, as indicated in col3 ln. 20-24 "a step of sending image data of said application window".

Additionally *Ohkado*, does not disclose or suggest "anchored" artifacts wherein locations within a file are associated with text conversations. Rather, *Ohkado* discloses the annotation of images. These annotations are not associated with the files themselves, but rather the raw image data transmitted or received through the message system. Finally, the images of *Ohkado* are viewed within a special image viewing window rather than applications associated with the particular file type. The approach of *Ohkado* is distinctly inferior as the disclosed text communications are not associated with artifacts such as documents, but rather raw images highlighted within a user's desktop. Furthermore, *Ohkado* depends on the capacity of the receiving client to receive raw image files.

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Claim 3 further recites that the application is configured to access sections of the artifact outside the anchor. As only visual selections are transmitted through the system *Ohkado* does not enable shared users to access other parts of the artifact, download a copy of the artifact, or otherwise access the data enclosed within the artifact.

The Examiner has noted the most recent Office Action that *England* does not disclose conversations anchored to a particular location within a file.

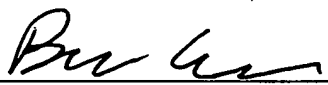
As neither *England* nor *Ohkado*, either alone or in combination, disclose the features of the claimed invention, Applicants respectfully submit that the present Application is patently distinguishable under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a)

The references cited by the Examiner but not relied upon have been reviewed, but are not believed to render the claims unpatentable, either singly or in combination.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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